

2005 Report of Accomplishments (July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005)

North Yakima Conservation District



Most Significant Natural Resource Accomplishment

- The NYCD is highly involved in Salmon recovery efforts within the Yakima River Basin. These efforts are implemented through the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program (YTAHP) which addresses passage barriers, fish screens and habitat needs. Cowiche Creek is one of the highest priority watersheds for Salmon recovery. The Pellicer Project removed a 2.8 foot dam barrier and replaced it with 5 rock structures and habitat features thus opening up 26 miles of upper watershed habitat for Steelhead and resident species.



Mission of the North Yakima Conservation District

- The mission of the North Yakima Conservation District is to make available technical, financial and educational resources to meet the conservation needs of the citizens who occupy and use the natural resources within our District.

Natural Resource Improvements in 2005 - Summary

- Eleven pump fish screens implemented within the Cowiche and Ahtanum Watersheds.
- Five fish barriers removed and/or corrected within the Cowiche and Ahtanum Watersheds.
- 3.4 miles of riparian habitat established and/or improved along fish bearing streams through riparian plantings and fencing.
- 35 miles of tributaries assessed for barriers, fish screen needs and habitat.

Water Quality Implementation

- NYCD's W/Q implementation activities center on addressing TMDL impairments including fecal-coli form and temperature in waterways of the District.
- NYCD has developed 14 farm plans with local landowners that have and will continue to protect 37.45 riparian acres from contributing to and help clean-up water quality impairments.

Basic Funding

- The NYCD utilizes its Basic Funding to support basic District operations, the most important of which is to maintain NYCD's local assessment. This local assessment is then utilized to leverage and/or initiate funding to implement NYCD's Annual and 5-year Plan.

Local Funding

- The NYCD actively sought and secured a special assessment pursuant to RCW 89.08 through the local legislative authority. The special assessment will be for a period of ten years (2005-2014) and is expected to net approximately \$74,000 annually to support implementation of the District's Annual and 5-year Plans.
- NYCD's Plant Material Facility (PMF) was purchased with assessment funds to be utilized as a tool for increasing the District's capacity and effectiveness in meeting native plant material needs. The PMF housed over 15,000 potted plants for projects in partnership with WACD Plant Material Center, Kittitas County Conservation District and WSU Cooperative Extension Services' Master Gardeners. The 2006 PMF Work Plan was developed and includes a Scope of Work, budget and goals highlighted by a spring and fall plant sale.
- NYCD's local assessment was used to develop, prepare, and secure Grant's, Memorandums of Understanding, and Inter-local Agreements. These included the Conservation Commissions "Livestock", "Irrigation Efficiencies" and "Implementation" Grants. Inter-local Agreements with South Central Resource Conservation and Development District for the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program, Bureau of Reclamation and United States Fish and Wildlife Service were implemented.

Professional Engineering

- The NYCD participates in an engineering cluster with four other Conservation Districts. This Program provides engineering services to NYCD's overall Program in an efficient and effective manner.
- Engineering services from this program have been used for the following Projects:
 - Pellicer Project** – Removed of a 2.8 foot fish barrier and replaced it with 5 rock structures and in stream habitat features. The project also replaced an access bridge with one that increased flood flow capacity and re-established riparian vegetation. Project was completed in the fall 2004.
 - Garretson Project** – Engineering design for a fish screen and passage barrier removal on Cowiche Creek. Project is scheduled for implementation in the fall of 2005.
 - Lesh Ditch Project** – Engineering design for a fish screen, fish by-pass and constructed riffle on Ahtanum Creek. Project is scheduled for implementation in the fall of 2005.
 - Shaw Knox Project** – Engineering design for a fish screen, fish by-pass, rearing pond development and stream bank protection. Project is scheduled for implementation in the fall of 2005.

Livestock/Dairy

- NYCD staff participated in AFO/CAFO training to prepare for the Conservation Commission Livestock Grant.

Irrigation Efficiencies

- The NYCD continues to work with several entities and landowner groups to establish Trust Water for in-stream flows on several flow critical tributaries. The most significant of which is the Cowiche Creek Water Users Group Project on Cowiche Creek. This Project will establish a trust water right of approximately 7.7 cfs in Cowiche Creek.

Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration

- The Buchanan Ranch Project: This SRFB Project which is entering its 5th and final year is implementing a comprehensive restoration Plan on 290 acres along a 2-mile stretch of Wenas Creek starting at its mouth at the Yakima River. This year the SRFB funding was expanded to include five adjacent properties within the current funding limits adding an additional half mile of stream to the overall Project. The six restoration plans establish riparian areas, correct/remove fish passage barriers and protect water quality. The Projects total budget was \$279,000.00.
- The NYCD is actively participating in the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program. This Program provides for stream habitat assessment, fish screen needs and barrier identification. After tributary assessment NYCD establishes a Tributary Team comprised of local watershed landowners who evaluate the technical assessment and adopt it as an "implementation plan". The NYCD is well underway towards implementation of barrier removal, fish screening and habitat improvement within the Cowiche and Ahtanum watershed. This multi-year Projects annual budget is \$284,000.00.

NYCD, assisting land managers and stewards with their conservation choices.

